



Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator

Gary Noesner

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An enraged man abducts his estranged wife and child, holes up in a secluded mountain cabin, threatening to kill them both. A right wing survivalist amasses a cache of weapons and resists calls to surrender. A drug trafficker barricades himself and his family in a railroad car, and begins shooting. A cult leader in Waco, Texas faces the FBI in an armed stand-off that leaves many dead in a fiery blaze. A sniper, claiming to be God, terrorizes the DC metropolitan area. For most of us, these are events we hear about on the news. For Gary Noesner, head of the FBI's groundbreaking Crisis Negotiation Unit, it was just another day on the job.

In *Stalling for Time*, Noesner takes readers on a heart-pounding tour through many of the most famous hostage crises of the past thirty years. Specially trained in non-violent confrontation and communication techniques, Noesner's unit successfully defused many potentially volatile standoffs, but perhaps their most hard-won victory was earning the recognition and respect of their law enforcement peers.

Noesner pursued his dream of joining the FBI all the way to Quantico, where he not only became a Special Agent, but also—in the course of a distinguished thirty-year career—the FBI's Chief Negotiator. Gaining respect for the fledgling art of crisis negotiation in the hard-boiled culture of The Bureau, where the shadow of J. Edgar Hoover still loomed large, was an uphill battle, educating FBI and law enforcement leaders on the job at an incident, and advocating the use of psychology rather than force whenever possible. Noesner's many bloodless victories rarely garnered as much media attention as the notorious incident management blunders like the Branch Davidian disaster in Waco and the Ruby Ridge tragedy.

Noesner offers a candid as well as fascinating look back at his years as a rebel in the ranks and a pioneer on the front lines. Whether vividly recounting showdowns with the radical Republic of Texas militia, the terrorist hijackers of the cruise ship Achille Lauro, and self-styled messiah David Koresh, or clashes with colleagues and superiors that expose the internal politics and power-plays of America's premier law enforcement agency, *Stalling for Time* crackles with breathtaking suspense and insight in equal measure. Case by case, minute by minute, it's a behind the scenes view of a visionary crime-fighter in action.

Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator Details

Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator

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jv poore says

What an extraordinary book! Mr. Noesner was involved in some very high-profile incidents, such as Ruby Ridge, Waco, as well as the Washington DC sniper crisis that those of us on the East Coast remember well. In addition, he was instrumental in the creation of the negotiation team in the FBI, training, drafting and revising policies and procedures, as well as acting in the capacity of a negotiator whenever and wherever needed.

This is a man that, in my opinion, has a right to be arrogant; however, it is crystal clear that he is indeed humble. After all of his accomplishments, I should not be surprised that he is such a magnificent writer, but I was. This book presents facts, time-lines and explanations. For those of us that watched any of these horrors unfold, and wondered what went so wrong, how and why; here are our answers.

When Mr. Noesner provides his opinions, they are clearly noted as his opinions, and while he may articulate mistakes that were made, there is no finger-pointing, name-calling or anything remotely along those lines. I believe that this is a very fair book, and I enjoyed it tremendously.

The tone of this book is very similar to that of Dave Cullen's *Columbine*---another outstanding non-fiction book with many answers, more questions and a fair view.

Dave Cullen says

This was only the second book I've ever blurbed. I was very impressed. My review:

This was such a rewarding book. I've always been fascinated by that very basic question: when someone is disturbed and irrational enough to actually pick up a gun and take hostages, how on earth do you talk him down?

What was most startling to me was that until very recently in human history--a few decades ago--we didn't know.

The more I learned, the hungrier I got to learn more. How interesting that so much of it amounts to listening.

I had previously learned a great deal about hostage negotiators researching my book *COLUMBINE*. (The head of the FBI investigation in that case, Dr. Dwayne Fuselier, was a leading negotiator and I spent a great deal of time with him.) Fuselier spoke very highly of Gary Noesner, so I was curious.

I expected to skim through much of it, but found myself hanging on every word. There is a great deal to learn here, and it was just as interesting to watch the story of how difficult it was to teach the FBI these ideas. Individuals picked them up rather easily, but making the institution embrace them was a bigger challenge.

My biggest surprise, though, was what a natural storyteller Noesner turned out to be. He has the easy style and readability of a lifelong novelist. It was a gripping and thoroughly enjoyable read.

Chris Steeden says

Friends and colleagues urged Gary Noesner (pronounced Nes-ner) to write a book on his hostage / crisis

negotiator experiences **‘to share the lessons I learned over years of convincing people to put down their weapons and surrender peacefully’**. He believes **‘that the skills discussed in this book can help anyone to become better person, a more engaged spouse, a more attentive parent, a better friend, and a more effective leader’**. Quite a claim. OK Gary, I am all ears.

The first case he writes about is way back in April 1988 when a man kidnaps his estranged former common-law wife and child. He takes them to a farmhouse in Sperryville, Virginia. The tension is quite intense.

Noesner goes over how he came to join the FBI and his first major siege in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1982 and his 8 years in the Washington Field Office (WFO) Terrorism Squad. He demonstrates how negotiation and tactical operations working together can bring about a successful conclusion versus just going into a situation all guns blazing.

When I think of hostage negotiations the two that spring to my mind are ‘Dog Day Afternoon’ which gets mentioned and Waco which gets a whole chapter. What a chapter it is too. The whole siege was a mess. This was certainly one of those times when **‘the negotiation and tactical teams had been at cross-purposes’**. He goes on to say **‘...if we had learned one thing from Waco, it was the lesson about not letting our emotions overpower our responsibilities’**.

I felt a couple of the chapters lagged somewhat but overall I did enjoy the book. So, has this book helped me become a better person? I’m not sure about that but I do understand what he means about how it may help.

I read all these books about really interesting jobs that people have. Let me know if you think there’ll be any appetite to hear my work stories? I sit at a desk for 10 hours per day sorting out functional system issues. I did drop my pen the other day and cleaned out my keyboard by turning it upside down. It was like a crumb Niagara Falls. I think I have chapter one sorted. Just wait until the spilling my coffee everywhere chapter. It’s a classic.

From Reader Review Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator for online ebook

From reader reviews:

Anna Snyder:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a walk, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open as well as read a book eligible Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have additional opinion?

Tammi Rosado:

The book untitled Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains the woman idea with easy method. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read that. The book was authored by famous author. The author gives you in the new time of literary works. You can read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-

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